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CONTAINING
A brief Deſcription of the Country, Cuſtomes, Religions, Manners, and Diſpoſitions of the People.

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Printed *Anno* 1648.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

Printed Anno 1672.

The PRINTER to the READER.

Reader,

THough relations of those Countries with whom we have had long and frequent Commerce, (which supposes us knowing of things either curious or needful) may be esteemed superfluous; yet for the better understanding of these short observations, it seems very necessary; for it is supposed they were intended by the Author (whom you will find ingenious) either to please himself, or delight the fancies of those that are acquainted with the fashions of the Country.

He

To the Reader.

He renders the Hollander an ingenuous ſubtle people, and if he be a little too free with them in their vices, 'tis pardonable: for when he obſerves their vertues, he endeavours to make requital.

To commend it were to detract: that were pity, for it is too little already: but being ſo, you may with more eaſe try whether it deſerves it.

To make large preambles, were not onely to be unlike our Author, but to erect a great gate to a ſmal Cottage.

It was thought deſerving the Preſs: I have done my part, do you but yours: that is, peruſe it, and add it to thy Library.

Farewel.

THESE MONETHS *Observations of the Low-Countries, especially* HOLLAND.

THey are generally a Sea-land: there is not such a marish in the world that is flat. They are an universal quagmire; epitomised, a green-cheese in pickle: such an Æquilibrian of earth and water, that a strong earthquake would shake them into a Chaos: they are the ingredients of a black pudding, and want onely stirring, else you would have more bread then greets: then have you no way to make it serve for any thing, but to spread it under *Zona Torrida*, and so dry it for Turfes. It is an excellent place

place for despairing lovers; for each corner affords them Willow; but if Justice should condemn one to be hanged on any other Tree, he might live long and confident. It is the Shrock of the world, full of veines and bloud; but no bones. Had St *Stephen* been condemned there to be stoned, he might have lived still; for (unless it be in their paved Townes) gold is more plentiful than stone. It is a singular place for monkies, for there are spiders as bigg as shrimps, and (I think) as many. You may travel the Country without a guide, for you cannot go out of the rode without hazard of drowning. A King that is a Crowding might have run away without staying for his Vsher, for he can go no whither but his way is made before him. Had they Cities as big as their walls, Rome were but a bubble to them. Twenty miles are nothing to be hurried over in one of

their

their waggons; where, if the Voerman be ſober, you travel ſafe, But deſcending from thence, you muſt have better faith then *Peter* had, or you ſink immediately, if your way be not his: thus it hangs in the water, and at the approach of the waggon, it will ſhake as if it were ague-ſtricken. The Duke D' *Alva* taxing the tenth penny, frighted it into a Palſy, which all the Mountebanks it had bred and had, knew not how to cure. They do ſome things which ſeem wonders; for they fiſh for fire in the waters, which they catch in nets, and tranſport to land in their boats, where they ſpread it ſmooth, as a Mercer doth his Velvet when he rooks an Heir of eighteen. Thus being in a meddow, you would ſuppoſe it a cantle of green-cheeſe, ſpread over with black butter. Their ordinary Pack-horſes are fram'd of wood, carrying their bridles in their tayles,

and their burdens in their bellies, and a ſtrong wind and ſtiffe gale are the ſpurs that make them ſpeedy. They dreſs their meat with *aqua cœleſtis*; for their water ſprings are not like ours, from the earth, but come to them as *Manna* to the Iſraelites, from heaven. the Elements here are at variance, the ſubtile overflow the groſſer, the fire conſuming the earth, and the ayr the waters; for they burn Turfs, and drain their grounds with Wind-mils, as if the Collick were a remedy for the Stone. The land they have is kept as neat as a Courtiers beard, and they have a method in mowing. It is ſo intervey ned with waters and rivers, that it is impoſſible to make a Common amongſt them. Even the Brownists are here at a ſtand. The poor are never complained of for breaking of hedges; ſurely had the men of Gotham lived here, they would have ſtudied ſome other priſon for the Cuckow.

Cuckow. Their ditches they frame as they liſt, and diſtinguiſh them into noecks, as my Lord Majors Cook doth his cuſtards: they cleanſe them often, but it is as Phyſicians give their potions, more to catch the fiſh, then caſt out the mud. Though their country be that of the main, yet every houſe ſtands as it were an Iland, and that (though a Boor dwell in it) looks as ſmug as a Lady new-painted. A gallants maſquing ſuit fits not more neatly than a thatcht cottage of many yeers wearing: if you finde it dry, it is embraced with vines, and if lower ſeated, it is onely a cloſe harbour within a plump of Willowes, and pleaſant enough, as long as the dog-daies laſt; but they overpaſt, you muſt practiſe wading or ſwimming; or remain priſoner till the Spring; onely a hard-froſt with the help of ſledges, may releaſe you. The Bridge to this is an outlandiſh planck, with a box of

ſtones

ſtones to poiſe it with, like a Quintin, which with the leaſt help, turns round like a Headſ-man; and when the maſter is over, ſtands drawn, and then he is in his Caſtle; 'tis ſure his fear that makes him ſuſpicious; therefore that he may ſee who enters, his window is ever over his dore; But it may be to ſhew his Pedigree; for (though his Anceſtors were never known) their Armes are there, which in ſpite of the Herald, ſhall bear their atchievements with the helmet of a Baron at leaſt; marry the field perhaps ſhall be charged with baskets, to ſhew his Fathers trade pourtrayed. When you are entred, the firſt thing you ſhall encounter is a looking-glaſs, the next, the Veſſels marſhalld about the houſe like watchmen, all as near, as if they were in a Ladies Cabinet; for (unleſs it be themſelves) none of Gods creatures loſe any of their native beauty there. Their houſes (eſpe-

cially

cially in the Cities) are the beſt eye-beauties in the Countrie, and in coſt and ſightlineſs, far exceed our Engliſh, wanting onely their magnificence; Their lineing are richer too, than their out-ſides, not in hangings, but Pictures, which the pooreſt there are furniſhed with: Not a Sowter but hath his toies for ornament: were the knacks of all their houſes ſet together, there were not ſuch a Bartholomew-fayr in Europe. Their Artiſts (for theſe are as rare as thought) for they can paint a fat-Hen in her fethers, and if you want their language, you may learn a great deal on the Signe-poſts; what they are, they ever write under them; in that onely they deal plainly, and by this device, hang more honeſtie than they keep. Their rooms are but ſeveral hand-boxes, wherein you muſt either ſwallow your ſpittle, or bluſh when you ſee a Mopp

brought in. Their beds are no other then Land-cabbins, high enough to need a Ladder or ſtairs; once up, you are walled in with wainſcot; and that is good diſcretion, to avoid the making wills every night, for once falling out, will break your neck perfectlie. But if you die in it, you leave your friends this comfort, that you died in clean linnen. Whatſoever their eſtates be, their linnen muſt be fine; therefore from Amſterdam they have baniſht Sea-coal; and leaſt it ſhould ſoil their buildings, of which the Statelier ſort are oft ſententious, and in their fronts carrie ſome conceit of the Author. Their houſes they keep cleaner than their bodies, and their bodies than their ſouls. Go to one, you ſhall finde the Andirons ſhut up in Network; at a ſecond, the warming pan muffled up in Italian cutwork; at a third, the skimmer laid

in

in Cambrick. For their propenſion to Venery, 'tis true, their women are not ſo readie at a ſpurt; for neither are they ſo generally bred to it, nor are their men ſuch linnen lifters. Idleneſs and Courtſhip have not baniſhed honeſty thence. They tattle much, and do leſs, yet their blood runs high, and their veins are full, which argues ſtrength; and if the Court turn them Gallants, they will take up the cuſtom of entertaining Ladies: and having once done it, I believe they will be notable: for I have heard they trade more for love than money, but 'tis for the trick, not the man: and therefore when they like the labour, they will reward the workman: otherwiſe their groſs feeding and clowniſh education hath ſpoyled them from being nobly minded. But I give you this on bare report, experience not having made me wiſe. They are generally boer-

iſh, yet may be bred Stateſmen, none of them being ſo nice of Conſcience, but they can turn out Religion, to let in Policie. Their Countrie is their God they worſhip, war their heaven, peace their hel, and the croſſe Spanjard their Devil, Cuſtom is their Law, and Will their Reaſon: you may ſooner convert a Jew, than make an ordinary Dutchman yeild to arguments that croſs him. An old Fryer is ſooner turned Puritan, than a Waggoner perſwaded not to brit twice in nine miles. His ſoul is compos'd of Engliſh beer, and his body of pickled herring, which renders him coſtive and teſtie: theſe two with a little butter are the ingredients of a meer Dutchman, which a voyage to the East-Indies, by the heat of the Æquinoctial conſolidates. If you ſee him fat, he hath been cooped in a roote-yard, and that hath blubbered him. For their conditions, they

are

are churlish, and (without doubt) very ancient: for they were bred before manners were in fashion. They should make good Justices, for they neither respect persons nor apparel. A Boer in his butter-slopps shall be equally entertain'd with a Courtier in his bravery. They are seldom deceived, for they trust no body; so by consequence they are better to hold a Fort than win it, yet they can do both. Trust them you must if you travel; for, to call for a bill to them, is to dive into a Wasps nest. Complement is an idleness they were never trayn'd up in; and it is their happiness that the Court hath not stoln away their minds. Their being Saylors and Souldiers, hath marr'd two parts already; and if they be bathed once in Court-oyle, they are painted trap-dores, and shall suffer the Jews to build a City where Harlem-mere is, then cosen them of it. They

shall

ſhall abuſe a ſtranger for nothing, and after a few baſe terms, ſcratch one another to a Carbonadoe, as they flea Rochetts. Nothing can quiet them but money and liberty, which having gotten, they abuſe both; but if you tell them ſo, you awake their fury; and you may ſooner calme the Sea, than conjure that into compaſſe again. They are all in a manner Aquatills, and therefore the Spanjards call them water-dogs. I agree not with them, yet I think they can catch a duck aſſoon. They love none but ſuch as do for them; and when their turne is ſerved, neglect them. They have no friends but their kinred, which meet at every wedding-feaſt, like Tribes among themſelves. All that help them not, they hold Popiſh; and think it a piece of honeſtie to raile againſt the King of Spain. Their ſhipping is their Babel they boaſt of, for the glory of their

their Nation; it is (indeed) wonderful, and they will have it ſo. But, we may well hope, they will never be potent by Land, leſt they ſhew us how doggedlie they can inſult where they get the maſterie. Their Navies are the ſcourge of Spain, and pills wherewith they purge the Indies. Nature hath not bred them ſo active by Land as others; but at Sea they are Water-Devills, and attempt things incredible. Their Ships lie like high woods in winter; and if you view them on the North ſide, you will freeze: for they ride ſo thick, that through them you can ſee no Sun. Sailors with them, are as common as beggars with us. They can rail, ſwear, juggle, ſteal, and be lowſie alike; but to examine the reſt, a gleeke of their knaves are worth a mourmeval of ours. All of them are Sea-men born, and like Froggs can live on land or water. Not a

threſher

threſher amongſt them, but can handle an Oare, ſteer a Boat, raiſe a maſt, and ken you over the rougheſt paſſage. Their Government is Democratical, and there had need be many Rulers over ſuch a rabble of rude ones. Tell them of a King, and they will cut your throat in earneſt; the very Name imports ſervitude; they ſpite it more then a Jew doth Bacon, or a Wood-man, old-age. None among them hath any authoritie by inheritance; that were the way to parcell out the Countrie into Families. They are all choſen, as we chuſe Aldermen, more for their wealth than their wit, which they ſo over-affect, that mijn Heer ſhall paſs the ſtreet like an old Ape, without a tail after him; and if they may be had cheap, ſhall daube his faced gown with a ſtiver-worth of pickled herring, which himſelf ſhall carrie home in a ſtring. The common

voice

voice hath given him pre-eminence, and he loathes it, living as when he was a Boer: but, if pardon be granted for what is past, they are about to think it time to learn more civilitie. Their Justice is strickt, if it cross not policie; but rather than hinder traffique, they will tolerate any thing. There is not such a Denne of subtle Foxes as Amsterdam, there you may be what beast you please, so you push not the State with your horns. It is an Universitie of all opinions, which grow in it confusedlie; as stocks in Norway, without order or pruning. If you be not setled in your Religion, you may there trie all, and at last take what you list. The Papists there must not Masse it publicklie, not because it is most hated, but because the Spaniard abridgeth the Protestant; and they had rather shew a little spleen, than not cry quittance with the Enemie:

This is their warrant, which they retaliate juſtlie; and for this reaſon, rather then the Dunkerks ſhall want hanging, Amſterdam, which hath none of her owne, will borrow a Hangman of Harlem. In their Families they are all Equalls, and you have no way to finde the Maſter and Miſtris, unleſs it be in bed together; It may be thoſe are they, otherwiſe Maulkin will prate as much, laugh as loud, and ſit on her tail as well as her Miſtris. Had Logicians lived there firſt, father and Son had not ſo long paſſed for Relatives, they are there whollie Individualls, for no demonſtrance of dutie or authoritie can diſtinguiſh them; as if they had been created together, and not ſucceſſivelie born: the Mother bidding her Daughter good-night, and kiſſing her, is a punctual bleſſing. Your man ſhall be malepertlie ſaucie, and you

must not ſtrike him; if you do, he ſhall complain to the States, and have recompence. It is a dainty place to pleaſe boyes in, for the father will bargain with the ſchool-maſter not to whip him, if he do, he will revenge him with his knife, and have law for it. Their apparel is civil enough, and good enough, but very uncomely; uſually it hath more ſtuffe than ſhape: onely womens Trinkets are commodious in winter, but 'tis pitty they have not the wit to leave them off when Summer comes. Some of their women would have good faces, if they did not marre them in the making. Men and Women are ſtarched ſo blue, that when they grow old, you would verily think, you ſaw old winter ſtanding up to the neck in a barrel of blue ſtarch. The men are tolerably clad, unleſs they encline to the Sea-faſhion, and then their

slops yawn at the knees, as if they were about unmercifully to devour their shanks. They are far from going naked; for, of a whole woman you can see but a piece of her face: as for her hands, they shew her to be a shrewd labourer, which you shall alwaies finde, as it were in recompence, laden with rings, to the cracking of their fingers: and she will rather want meat, than a Cart-rope of silver, hung with keyes. Their gownes are fit to hide great bellies; but they make them shew so unhandsome, that men do not care to get them. Marry this you shall ever finde to their commendations, their smocks are ever whiter then their skins, much cleaner, and far sweeter. They rail at us for our various change of habit, but plead for their owne more earnestly than lay-Catholicks for their faith, which they resolve to keep, because their Ance-

stors

ſters lived and died in it. For their dyet, they eat much, and ſpend little; when they ſend out a fleet to the Eaſt-Indies, they live three moneths on the Offalis, which here would ſurfet a ſwine. In their houſes, roots and ſtock-fiſh are ſtaple commodities. At their feaſts when they have fleſh, they have the art to keep it hot, as long as our fleet-lane cooks do incaſell'd Porke. To a Feaſt they come readily, but once ſet, you muſt have patience, for they are longer eating their meat, than we in dreſſing it: You conclude Supper betimes, if you get away by day-break. It is a piece of good manners (if there be any) to carry away a piece of Apple-pie in your pocket; their time they ſpend in eating well, drinking much, and prating moſt.

In this progreſs you have ſeen ſomwhat of their evills; now obſerve them. Solomon telis us of four

things very ſmall, but full of wiſdom; the Piſmire, the Conie, the Spider, and the Grashopper, and they are all for providence. They are the Piſmires of the world, who having nothing but what the graſs yeilds them, are (yet) for all proviſions become the ſtore-houſe of Chriſtendom. They are frugal to the ſaving of Egg-ſhells, and maintain for a maxime, that many an old thing mended, will laſt longer than a new. Their Cities are their mole-hills, whence their ſhips and fly-boats creep and return, laden for winter with ſtore. For dwelling in rocks, they are Conies; where have you under heaven, ſuch impregnable Fortifications, where Art beautifies Nature, and Art makes Nature invincible? Indeed herein they differ; the Conies finde rocks, and they make them; and, as if they would invert Moſes miracles, they make them in the bo-

ſome

some of the waves of Bemsters land, where within these eighteen yeers; Ships furrowed the pathlesse Ocean, the peaceful plow embowells the fruitful earth. For war they are Grashoppers; for they go out without Kings. There is not in Europe, such a Schoole of martiall discipline. For Industry, they are Spiders; and live in the Palaces of Kings: None have the like intelligence. Their marchants are this day the greatest in the Universe. What Nation is it, where into they have not insinuated themselves? nay, which they have not Anatomiz'd and discovered the intricate veins of it? All they doe, is with such labour, as it seems to be extracted out of their own bowells: and by them we may learn, that no rain fructifies like the dew of sweat. You would think (being with them) you were in old Israel; for there is not a beggar amongst them: if he be

unable, he findes an Hoſpitall; if he would depart, hee ſhall have mony for his Convoy; if ſtay, he ſhall have work. And, leſt you ſhould in fruitleſs mourning, their burials end by two of the clock. Even their Bedlam is a place ſo curiouſly kept, that a Lord might live in it: Their Hoſpitall might lodge a Lady; their Bridewell a Gentlewoman, and their common priſon a rich Citizen: But, for a poore man, it is the beſt refuge; for, he that caſt him in, muſt keep him there. Even their dwelling is a miracle: for, they live lower than the very Fiſh in the Lap of their floods, and incirculed in their watery camps, they ſeem like the Itraelites paſsing the Red Sea. Their Walls wall them in: and if they open their Sluces, they drownd their enemies. Againe, they are the Indian rats, gnawing the bowels of the Spaniſh Crocodiles, into which they got when they gaped to ſwallow

swallow them: they are the Serpents, wrethed about the leggs of that Elephant his almoſt invincible innumerable Kingly titles, they are the Sword-fiſh under the Whale: they are the war of that great Empire which increaſed in Iſabella, and when Charles the fifth was at the full. They are the Glaſs wherein Kings may ſee, that nothing makes am ore deſparate rebellion, than Prerogatives too far urged; that oppreſſion is to heat an iron, till it burn your hand; that an extream taxation, is to ſteal away the honey, till the Bees leave the hive; that their own tyrannie is the greateſt enemie to their eſtate: that a deſire of being too abſolute, is to preſs a thorn that will prick you; that to debarr an Eſtate of ancient priviledges, is to make a ſtream more violent by ſtopping it; that unjuſt policie is to ſhoot (as they did at Oſtend) into the mouth of a charged

Canon

Canon, and to have two bullets returned for one: that admonitions of a dying man are too serious to be neglected.

To conclude, the Countrey it self, is a moated Castle keeping two of the richest jewels in the world in it, the Queen of Bohemia, and the Princess of Orange. The people are all Jews of the New Testament and in fine have changed nothing but the Law for the Gospel.

FINIS.